

Osmeña vs. Roxas

● By Andres Zaldivar

● A Preview of Their Chances To Be Elected the Next President of the Commonwealth

The role of forecaster is always disagreeable and difficult. Furthermore, if the forecast is about political contests it is an absolute certainty that the writer will find plenty of contradiction and abuse. The least that will be said about him is that he is a self-conceited ignoramus. We are not deterred by this consideration, for we know that political writers must be prepared to stand a lot of criticism and insult. What we should like to avoid is being called partial or biased, for we shall try to answer the burning question in all honesty, basing our computations on facts about national and local politics exactly as we see them.

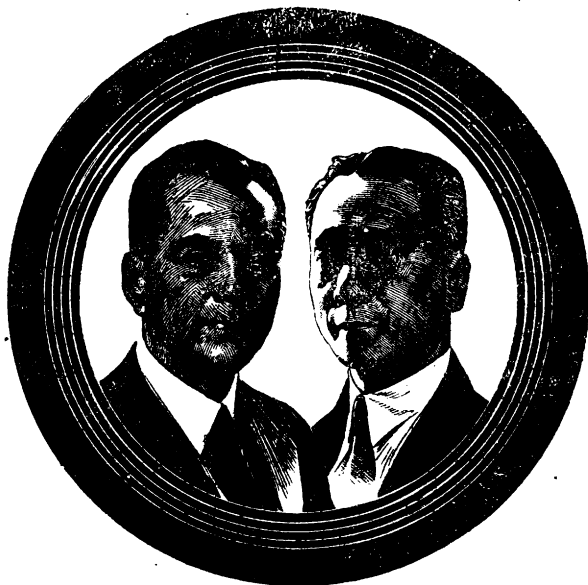
The coming presidential fight in all probability will be a duel between Sergio Osmeña and Manuel Acuña Roxas. What their chances will be four months from now, nobody can accurately say. Roxas seems to have the edge at this moment, but no matter how big his lead may be the advantage may be over come by his opponent whose experience and sagacity must always be reckoned with. The present forecast will only try to answer the question of who would be the probable choice were the elections to held tomorrow. The answer to it is: definitely ROXAS.

The first factor that should be analyzed is who will be the Vice-presidential candidates and their vote pulling capacities. The President, at this moment, seems to be undecided between Carlos P. Romulo and Eulogio Rodriguez Sr. The choice must apparently fall upon somebody from Luzon because the President is from the Visayas. As far as vote pulling goes, Rodriguez would be perhaps considered more valuable, for he can dump into the presidential wagon an overwhelming majority of the Rizal votes. In the case of Romulo, he can not claim political ascendancy in any particular region or province. But should the

qualifications of the candidate for Vice-President become one of the election issues (Time Magazine, June 11, calls Osmeña the "aging" and "ailing" President), Romulo might become more valuable as running-mate. On the Roxas ticket, Quirino's name is the only one under consideration. He is from Luzon and he can command a sizeable portion of the Ilocano votes. Next to the Vice-presidency, the issue of "collaboration" will be an important factor, for it may decide the final alignment of the most influential politicians in the different districts and provinces.

The situation today stands pretty clearly. Since both presidential candidates hail from the Visayas, let us study their respective followings in the biggest Visayan provinces. Cebu, Osmeña's bailiwick, will give him a majority. How big or small this majority may turn out, will depend on how efficiently the opposing Cuenco faction may handle its own forces. If we give Osmeña a 70% score in Cebu, the guess will be quite safe. Bohol will also go for Osmeña because of his personal following and for the solid backing that he gets

from Senator Garcia who is now the undisputed leader of the province. The Osmeña lead in these two provinces will be overcome and surpassed by the Roxas votes in Iloilo, Capiz and Antique. The Senate President can be sure of a very big majority in the Island of Panay, provided he can retain the support of Speaker Zuleta. Negros Occidental will appear in the Roxas column. The Alunan faction is solidly behind him (Hernandez-Montelibano - Lizares-Coscolluela), while the Yujo faction is divided, with Magalona going for Osmeña, and Gonzaga and Vargas for Roxas. Negros Oriental is doubtful. With the complete elimination of the Villanuevas from the political scene, there is no doubt that the votes of Negros Oriental are controlled by the Romero-Teves combination. Although both of them seem to be partial towards Roxas now, it is entirely possible that they may change sides or that their team may be split, because Romero is of Speakership caliber and he may have an eye to that position. Leyte, a fairly big province, does not have a political boss, and must be studied by dis-



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tricts. Of its five Congressmen, only two are now available (Montejo and Canonoy). The remaining three (Tan, Oppus and Veloso) are in Muntinglupa, accused of collaboration. Nothing definite is known of Montejo's and Canonoy's leanings, but it is safe to assume that the followers of Tan, Oppus and Veloso will back Roxas. The most that can be given to Osmeña in Leyte is a fifty-fifty chance. Samar is also an unknown factor, because the man who will sway its votes in a decisive way is not yet committed to anybody. This man is ex-Secretary Avelino.

Mindanao has fewer votes than either Luzon or Visayas. As a matter of fact, until now the votes of Mindanao have not been decisive in any national elections. But in a very close fight, which the coming one may turn out to be, the way Mindanao votes may be the deciding factor. Lack of fairly accurate data makes it extremely difficult to gauge the situation in Mindanao. However, we may assume that in the northern provinces, where the Cebuano population is predominant, Osmeña will have an edge. In Misamis Oriental, the Vamenta-Artadi faction holds the balance. Vamenta may go for Roxas, but Artadi's stand is uncertain. In Misamis Occidental, Roxas will have a majority because the Ozamiz faction will probably support him. Stuart del Rosario may also side with him. In Zamboanga there will be a close fight, because votes will be split between the Lorenzo and Alano factions, the former going for Osmeña and the latter for Roxas. Cotabato may go to Osmeña, because Datu Piang seems to support him, while Davao will be for Osmeña or Roxas as Sarenas may choose to go. Lanao may also appear in the Osmeña column, if Congressman Lluch decides to support him. If Lluch goes for Roxas, Lanao will be divided, for the Cabili votes will certainly go to Osmeña. Bukidnon will give Roxas a clean majority, because of the support of the Fortich faction.

It is Luzon, at any rate, that

will decide the contest. It is not only the biggest voting region, but the fact is that actual voting will be heaviest in Luzon because here normal conditions have been restored more quickly. And the general situation in Luzon does not look very encouraging for Osmeña.

The Ilocos region, comprising the big provinces of Abra, Cagayan, Isabela, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union and Zambales, will give Roxas an overwhelming majority. Quirino will be able to swing many votes, Paredes, followers, because of the Osmeña faction's attacks on "collaborators", will side with Roxas, Arranz will command a majority in Cagayan and Isabela, the factions of both Ortega and Osias in La Union will support the Senate President, and even in Zambales Anonas and Afable will support, "smart, swart, Brigadier General Roxas" (Time, June 11).

On the basis of the inclinations of the incumbent Congressmen, Pangasinan will also appear on the Roxas column. Beltran, Bengzon, Perez and Ramos are for Roxas, while only Primicias sides with the present occupant of Malacañan. Tarlac may go for Osmeña, if Cojuangco supports him. At any rate the Aquino faction will be solidly behind Roxas. In Nueva Ecija, the deciding voice will still be that of Buencamino. He has kept silent until now, but indications are that he may join the Roxas ranks. Pampanga is doubtful. If there was a socialist candidate, he would get the majority here, but in the absence of one the Pampanga votes may be finally

counted in favor of the more liberal candidate. Bulacan will go for Roxas. The strong influence of the Rustia-De Leon family (Mrs. Roxas is De Leon) plus the following of Villarama is more than a match for old and sickly Senator Buendia. Tayabas is doubtful. Although the Provincial Board has recently committed itself in favor of Osmeña, Gov. Enriquez and his Board members are not the real political power in the province of the late President Quezon. If Mrs. Quezon should decide to choose sides, her support will be the decisive factor in Tayabas. Any candidate who carries Manila will have a very small majority. Laguna will also divide its votes, the same as Cavite (Montano for Osmeña, ex-Assemblyman Roxas for the Senate President). Batangas will appear for Roxas, who will get the votes of the followers of "collaborators" Recto, Laurel and Ajas. The Bicol regions will be evenly divided, on the basis of the preferences of their incumbent Congressmen. Rizal is the only province in Luzon that will give an overwhelming majority to Osmeña, because Senator Rodriguez is indisputably the leader in this province.

On the strength of the foregoing analysis, the inescapable conclusion is that Roxas will run away with the next presidential elections. But we must repeat that these calculations are based on conditions as they are today. The whole situation may be radically changed in four months, and for all we know the final results of the coming November elections may be entirely different from the

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Life of Rizal To Be Filmed

San Feldman, Hollywood producer, has been granted permit by Dr. Trinidad Rizal, sister of the Philippine National Hero, to make a motion picture based on the life of the Malayan patriot. The authorization has been recently wired to the United States thru the Department of the Interior.

Gonzales Elected To Presidency

Bienvenido Gonzales, President of the U. P. at the start of the war, subsequently "graduated" from Fort Santiago, was elected to the Presidency of the State University in the first meeting held by the Board of Regents. Gonzales took his oath of office before President Osmeña shortly after his election.

one we have ventured to forecast.

Compliments of
Hon. Cornelio T. Villareal
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